

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listings of Claims:**

Claim 1 (currently amended): A method of regulating the rate of packet grants in an asynchronous cross-point switch, said method comprising ~~the steps of:~~:

incrementing a counter for every packet grant issued by an arbiter to a traffic source to release a packet having a particular output for a destination;

decrementing the counter each time a packet stored in a buffer is read out from the buffer; and

instructing the arbiter to cease issuing grants for packets having the output as a destination once the counter has exceeded a predetermined threshold.

Claim 2 (new): The method of Claim 1 further comprising:

negating the instruction to the arbiter to cease issuing grants, based at least on a hysteresis setting, thereby to start issuing grants again after said instructing.

Claim 3 (new): The method of Claim 1 wherein:

the predetermined threshold is programmable by writing to a predetermined register.

Claim 4 (new): The method of Claim 1 further comprising:

periodically auditing the counter to avoid upward drift due to loss of packets.

Claim 5 (new): The method of Claim 1 further comprising:

each time the counter is decremented, decrementing an additional counter; incrementing the additional counter for every packet stored into the buffer; and

instructing the arbiter to cease issuing grants for packets having the buffer as a destination once the additional counter has exceeded an additional predetermined threshold.

**Claim 6 (new):** A method of regulating the rate of packet grants in an asynchronous cross-point switch, said method comprising:

incrementing a counter for every packet stored into a buffer;

decrementing the counter each time a packet stored in the buffer is read out from the buffer; and

instructing an arbiter to cease issuing grants for packets having the buffer as a destination once the counter has exceeded a predetermined threshold.

**Claim 7 (new):** The method of Claim 6 further comprising:

negating the instruction to the arbiter to cease issuing grants, based at least on a hysteresis setting, thereby to start issuing grants again after said instructing.

**Claim 8 (new):** The method of Claim 6 wherein:

the predetermined threshold is programmable by writing to a predetermined register.

**Claim 9 (new):** The method of Claim 6 wherein:

the buffer is at an output of the cross-point switch.

**Claim 10 (new):** The method of Claim 6 wherein:

the buffer is at an input of the cross-point switch.

**Claim 11 (new):** The method of Claim 6 wherein:

the buffer is at an input of the cross-point switch; and

the method further comprises performing said incrementing, said decrementing and said instructing with another buffer at an output of the cross-point switch.